

Remarks and Arguments:

This amendment is filed before the three month shortened statutory period for response. Therefore, no extension of time or other fees are believed to be due, except as detailed in the attached documents. However, any extension of time necessary to prevent abandonment is hereby requested, and any fee necessary for consideration of this response is hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account Number 502846 (Customer Number 36163).

Claims 1 and 2 have been amended, and claims 8-20, which are directed to non-elected inventions, have been withdrawn. New claims 21-32 have been added and are being presented with this amendment. Claims 1-8 and 21-32 remain pending in this application.

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the amendments presented above and the following remarks.

Applicant requests that the Examiner approve the corrections submitted in the attached Request for Drawing Changes. In the Request for Drawing Changes submitted with this response, the Applicant has endeavored to correct the informalities noted by the Examiner in the outstanding Office Action.

Claim 1 has been amended to require an "upper member being connected to an air spring assembly by a pivoting connection." The prior art lacks this feature. Jurrens (EP 1 378 432) fails to teach an upper member, much less an upper member that is connected to an air spring assembly by a pivoting connection. The suspension system of Jurrens uses a flat swing arm 22 having a pair of arms 24. While it may be argued that arms 24 may serve as a lower member, Jurrens does not teach an upper member that is connected to arms 24. Fender struts 18a and 18b are rigidly attached to chassis 12 and cannot serve as an "upper member" of a suspension.

Parker (U.S. patent number 6,668,960) also fails to teach or render obvious “upper member being connected to an air spring assembly by a pivoting connection.” In contrast to the present invention, Parker teaches a conventional airbag mounting system where airbag 39 to lower airbag mount 23 via the supplied mounting studs or threaded inserts. See column 8, lines 32-38; see also Figure 6. The use of either mounting studs or threaded inserts would rigidly attach airbag 39 to lower airbag mount 23. Thus, the mounting arrangement of Parker would not allow airbag 39 to pivot with respect to airbag mount 23, as required by amended claim 1.

The prior art fails to expressly teach or render obvious, either singularly or in any permissible combination, a motorcycle suspension with an “upper member being connected to an air spring assembly by a pivoting connection.” For this and other reasons, Applicant believes that amended claim 1 is allowable over the prior art. Because dependent claims include all of the limitations of the independent claim from which they depend, dependent claims 2-8 are also allowable for the same reasons as amended claim 1.

New claim 23 requires a motorcycle rear suspension with an air bladder assembly “wherein the bladder is attached to an outer radial surface of the forward mounting plate and an outer radial surface of the rear mounting plate.” In other words, the bladder is attached generally to the outer periphery of the mounting plates. This arrangement is shown, for example, in Figure 4 and the accompanying description, among other places. Jurrens (EP 1 378 432) fails to teach an airbag mounted to a plate and Parker (U.S. patent number 6,668,960) teaches a conventional airbag assembly where the bladder is attached to the end faces of a pair of opposing plates. The prior art fails to teach a bladder attached to the outer radial surface of the forward mounting plate and the outer radial surface of the rear mounting plate.

Because the prior art fails to expressly teach or render obvious, either singularly or in any permissible combination, a motorcycle suspension with a bladder that is attached

to an outer radial surface of the forward mounting plate and an outer radial surface of the rear mounting plate, Applicant believes that new claim 23 is allowable over the prior art. Because dependent claims include all of the limitations of the independent claim from which they depend, dependent claims 24 and 25 are also allowable for the same reasons as new claim 23.

New claim 26 requires a motorcycle rear suspension with an air spring system where the air bladder has a forward bulge portion disposed forward of a front plate. In other words, a portion of the air bladder can extend forward of any portion of a front plate. This arrangement is shown, for example, in Figure 6 and the accompanying description, among other places. Jurrens (EP 1 378 432) fails to teach a plate and Parker (U.S. patent number 6,668,960) teaches a conventional airbag assembly where a bellows type bladder is used. See Figure 6, and see column 8, lines 32-38. The bellows type airbag extends and contracts like an accordion and no portion of the bellows would extend beyond opposing plates that hold the bellows. Therefore, the prior art fails to teach a bladder with a forward bulge portion disposed forward of a front plate.

Because the prior art fails to expressly teach or render obvious, either singularly or in any permissible combination, a motorcycle suspension with such a bladder, Applicant believes that new claim 26 is allowable over the prior art. Because dependent claims include all of the limitations of the independent claim from which they depend, dependent claims 27-30 are also allowable for the same reasons as new claim 26.

New claim 31 requires a motorcycle rear suspension with an air spring system where the front plate is misaligned with the rear plate when the air bag is in a compressed condition. This arrangement is shown, for example, in Figure 7 and the accompanying description, among other places. Jurrens (EP 1 378 432) fails to teach a plate and Parker (U.S. patent number 6,668,960) teaches a conventional airbag assembly where a bellows type bladder is used. See Figure 6, and see column 8, lines 32-38. The bellows type airbag of Parker remains aligned in the compressed condition.

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Because the prior art fails to expressly teach or render obvious, either singularly or in any permissible combination, a motorcycle suspension with a suspension including an air bladder system that is capable of misaligning in a compressed condition, Applicant believes that new claim 31 is allowable over the prior art. Because dependent claims include all of the limitations of the independent claim from which they depend, dependent claim 32 is also allowable for the same reasons as new claim 31.

In view of the foregoing, all of the pending claims in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any questions or determine that any further action is desirable to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the Applicant's representative at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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